

4-1-2003

Purple hearts

Susan Day Gray '78
Furman University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine>

Recommended Citation

Gray, Susan Day '78 (2003) "Purple hearts," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 46 : Iss. 1 , Article 18.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol46/iss1/18>

This Article is made available online by Journals, part of the Furman University Scholar Exchange (FUSE). It has been accepted for inclusion in Furman Magazine by an authorized FUSE administrator. For terms of use, please refer to the [FUSE Institutional Repository Guidelines](#). For more information, please contact scholarexchange@furman.edu.

Furman philanthropy

Purple hearts

Few can match Carol and Jim Ney when it comes to loyalty to alma mater

How would you describe the ideal Furman alumni couple? Faithful? Loyal? Generous? Compassionate?

By any measure, Jim and Carol Ney fit this description. Just mention their names to anyone on campus or to any Furman volunteer and you will hear a stream of accolades about their contributions of time and talent to Furman.

Their story together begins when they were 5-year-old classmates at Mrs. Bloodworth's Kindergarten in Atlanta, Ga. They remained steady friends through school, even serving as seventh grade co-captains of the safety patrol at Morris Brandon Elementary School. In high school their friendship blossomed into love, and the two married and enrolled at Furman. Carol says, "We have been together so long, there are no secrets!"

After Jim graduated from Furman in 1964 and then completed law school at the University of Georgia, the Neys settled into their lives in Atlanta. Their three girls — Lynn Ney Smith '84, Karen Ney Tracy '88 and Arden Ney Brewer — kept them busy, and Jim's law practice flourished. In 1984 he became a founding partner in the Holt, Ney, Zatcoff, and Wasserman firm and has since been selected for all seven editions of *Best Lawyers in America*.

The Neys became active volunteers with their church, and Jim has held various leadership roles in the Atlanta area, including serving on (and chairing) the board of trustees of both the Schenck School, for children with learning disabilities, and Community Friendship, Inc., which works with mentally handicapped adults. Carol devoted a great deal of time to the Center for the Visually Impaired, where she served two terms on the board.

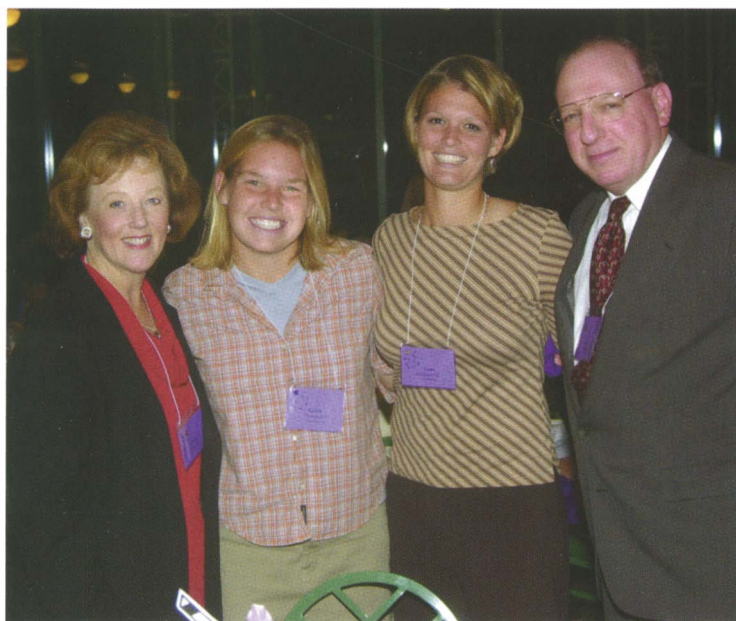
Despite their involvement in so many activities in their hometown, the Neys still felt a need to do more — especially for Furman. While attending an Atlanta Furman Club event 15 years ago, they met Don Fowler, Furman's director of development, and expressed their desire to give something back to Furman because of its influence on their lives. In the days following that meeting, they volunteered their services.

Little did Fowler know how much the Neys were offering. Over time they helped to build the Atlanta Club into a powerhouse — the model of an active Furman Club.

Since then, whenever Furman has requested their help, they have responded with a resounding "yes." From support of capital projects (such as the renovation of the James B. Duke Library and the construction of John E. Johns Hall, Minor H. Mickel Tennis Center and Nan Trammell Herring Music Pavilion) to donations for scholarships and unrestricted gifts, the Neys have given unselfishly to Furman.

Aside from Jim's service on the alumni board and the board of trustees, where he's now in his second term, their most recognizable contributions have been in support of scholarships and the Richard Furman Society. They were leaders in the establishment of the Atlanta Furman Club's annual scholarship, and in 1991 they endowed the James and Carol Ney Athletic Scholarship for football or baseball athletes from Georgia. In 1999 they developed the Carol Ney Women's Tennis Scholarship as part of the Furman Partners Scholarship Program, which encourages donors and scholarship recipients to develop a close relationship during the time the student is enrolled.

Indeed, the Neys are ideal Partners. Besides funding the scholarship, they also entertain the entire tennis team in their home



Carol and Jim Ney spend time with two Lady Paladin tennis players, Krista Thomson '03 (left center) and Gene Holman '02.

in Atlanta when the women play in the area. Gene Holman '02, a Ney Scholar, says, "Without the Neys' generosity, Furman would not have been a possibility for me. I am so thankful for their financial contribution as well as their interest in me as a student-athlete. They are an amazing couple with a genuine interest in Furman and its students."

The Neys also understand the importance of unrestricted gifts, which can be used to support any area of the university. Since 1994 they have been members of the Richard Furman Society, the gift club that recognizes donors who support Furman with unrestricted gifts of \$10,000 or more. Since 2000 they have co-chaired the society's executive committee. Under their leadership the group's membership has grown by a whopping 22 percent and promises to grow further.

"We owe so much to Carol and Jim Ney," says Don Fowler. "They have been the driving force in developing the Atlanta area into such a vital resource for Furman, not just in terms of financial support but also in recruiting students and volunteer leaders. Furman is truly blessed to benefit from their generous spirit."

What makes this extraordinary couple remain so loyal to alma mater while balancing the needs of family, work, community, three children, three sons-in-law and five (almost six) grandchildren? According to Jim, "Furman has been such an important part of our lives for so many years that we feel strongly that we should give back to the university. We have loved Furman for more than 40 years, and we know that our lives were forever changed in a positive way by the influence of this marvelous university."

"We want to do our part to help Furman achieve the greatest success possible and to ensure that worthy students can attend."

— Susan Day Gray '78
Stewardship Director